



PRESS RELEASE
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For Immediate Release

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COLLIER COUNTY COUPLE FOUND GUILTY OF DRUG CONSPIRACY

Joseph James Stratton, age 52, and Elizabeth Marie Morse Thompson, age 48, both of Naples, Florida were convicted of conspiracy to possess with intent to distribute and distribution of crack cocaine and powder cocaine after a one week trial in Fort Myers by a jury in U.S. District Court. Ms. Thompson was also convicted of two counts of possession with intent to distribute crack cocaine.

The jury heard testimony from eight witnesses, some of which had previously pled guilty to federal drug charges. Evidence at the trial showed that the defendants were part of a drug distribution ring in Collier and Lee Counties, Florida, since at least 1998.

Both Mr. Stratton and Ms. Thompson face a maximum of 40 years in prison, without parole, and a fine of up to a \$2 million. Based on the jury verdict, Mr. Stratton must forfeit real property at 4461 Pine Ridge Road Ext, Naples, Florida, to the United States as proceeds of his drug activities.

The case was investigated by Special Agents of the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) and the DEA Task Force of Naples. The case was prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Jesus M. Casas.